

Testimonial

One evening in early July 2006, Gemma was working in an off-licence which is situated in a parade of shops in Stevenage. She was working on her own, as she often does, when a customer came in, started being abusive and threatened her.

As a result she pressed her AlertBox button for the very first time to summon up some support from her neighbours. Within seconds she had half a dozen fellow traders with her and the awkward customer fled.

Gemma and her colleagues in the off-licence now have a very good relationship with their neighbours as a result of them coming to her assistance. The unwanted customer has not returned.

"I feel safer and I don't feel like I'm on my own now that I have my own AlertBox," said Gemma.

Gemma Lancaster
age 19
Shop Assistant
The Local
Stevenage



This is the first project for Stevenage Borough Council's Community Safety Team – the people who awarded Gemma's shop its AlertBox. The project team included members from the council, police and Safer Neighbourhood Team's PCSOs.

In an article in the local press, Bob Clark, Executive Councillor for Community Safety, said: "The AlertBox scheme will benefit both traders and shoppers alike. It will encourage cooperation between the businesses in The Oval shopping centre and make it a safer and friendlier place to visit and do business."

Stevenage Police crime prevention officer Mark Montgomery said: "This is a very useful tool for our partnership working.

"It will increase the number of potential witnesses to incidents, and retailers can respond quickly – meaning they are already on scene when police arrive. Just having additional help at an incident can resolve the matter. The AlertBox scheme encourages retailers to talk to each other and increases community spirit."



Building safer neighbourhoods

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